a reward for this hazardous expedition in sentimental or distant returns, but they understood perfectly the words of a harangue delivered at Toulon before embarking, which, besides being a reminder of the plunder they had taken in Italy, contained the blunt promise that this time every man should return with money enough to buy seven acres of land. Sailors and soldiers alike were thrilled by the call to establish liberty on the plains of the ocean, as they had on the plains of Lombardy. They even dimly apprehended the meaning of a proclamation, issued at sea, in which their destination was finally revealed, and certain success was foretold, if they would respect the women, the goods, and the faith of the Mohammedans.

Yes; it was a sanguine expedition which, relying on an apparent relaxation of England's vigilance, set sail for Malta. The geographical situation of that island makes it in proper hands the citadel of the Mediterranean, the bulwark of Christendom against heathendom. But the military monks to whom it had been intrusted were grown corrupt and licentious. The Maltese loathed their masters. French agents had already been among them, winning thousands of the people and some of the French knights; and such was the internal disorder at the approach of Bonaparte that after the merest show of resistance to his demands, the gates of an almost impregnable fortress were dishonorably opened to the French republic without a blow. The order, neither monastic nor military in any true sense, was virtually annihilated by the sequestration of its goods, though nominally it survived as vassal to the crown of Naples under the protection of Russia. The spoils of the treasury and the Church were quickly seized, a goodly treasure, and added to the French war* chest. Waiting only to garrison his easy conquest, and